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Appln. No.: 10/644,137

PRU-103US

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Appln. No.: 10/644,137  
Applicant: Kevin K. Lehmann et al.  
Filed: August 20, 2003  
Title: TAPERED FIBER OPTIC STRAIN GAUGE USING CAVITY RING-DOWN  
SPECTROSCOPY  
TC/A.U.: 1743  
Examiner: Samuel P. Siefke  
Confirmation No.: 6484  
Docket No.: PRU-103US

**DECLARATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.131**

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

We, Kevin K. Lehmann, Peter B. Tarsa, and Paul Rabinowitz, hereby declare that:

1. We are the co-inventors of the subject matter of the patent application identified above and its parent patent application serial no. 10/017,367, filed on December 12, 2001 ("the parent application") and are familiar with the contents of these patent applications.
2. The purpose of this declaration is to establish completion in the United States at a date before October 9, 2001, of the invention of the subject matter disclosed in the application and relied upon in the Office Action of June 5, 2006, as the basis to reject the pending claims.
3. All of the acts described in this declaration took place within the United States.
4. At the time of our contribution to the conception and reduction to practice of the invention, each of us inventors was an employee of or a student enrolled at Princeton University, the assignee of the present invention.
5. We conceived of the invention disclosed and claimed in the parent application at least as early as April 27, 2001, a date earlier than the earliest effective filing date of U.S.

Patent Publication 2002/0092977 (the '977 publication). A letter recommending the proposal to the General Exams Committee dated April 27, 2001 is attached hereto as Exhibit 1.

6. The invention was submitted as part of a proposal to the General Exams Committee of the University before May 4, 2001, which is before the earliest effective filing date of the '977 publication. The proposal is attached hereto as Exhibit 2. As is clearly demonstrated by the proposal, when read as a whole, and in particular pp. 5-12, the portions of the present invention, on which the Office is basing its rejections in view of the '977 publication, was fully described at least as early as the date that the Proposal was submitted to the General Exams Committee, which date is earlier than the effective filing date of the '977 Publication.

7. An oral defense of the proposal was heard by the General Exams Committee on or about May 4, 2001, a date which is still before the earliest effective filing date of the '977 publication.

8. Further, on May 4, 2001, a date still before the filing date of the '977 publication, the University approved the proposal as noted in the General Examination Report attached hereto as Exhibit 3.

9. We next submitted an Invention Disclosure form, disclosing our invention for the parent application, to the Legal Department of Princeton University on October 29, 2001. A copy of this submission is attached hereto as Exhibit 4.

10. The Princeton Legal Department acknowledged receipt of the Invention Disclosure on November 1, 2001, and then began evaluation of the merits of our invention to determine whether to file a patent application. A copy of the letter of acknowledgement is attached hereto as Exhibit 5.

11. The Princeton Legal Department subsequently completed its evaluation and requested that the law firm of RatnerPrestia prepare a patent application covering our invention of a fiber optic based cavity ring-down spectroscopy apparatus. A copy of that request is attached hereto as Exhibit 6.

12. A draft of the parent application was completed by RatnerPrestia on December 11, 2001, reviewed and revised by us as the inventors. The final draft of the parent application was submitted to us for final review and approval on December 12, 2001. RatnerPrestia then proceeded to file the parent application in the United States Patent and Trademark Office on December 12, 2001.

13. An improvement of the initial invention, which is the subject of the present application, was conceived at least as early as July 8, 2003 and provided to our patent counsel RatnerPrestia for incorporation in the present application. A copy of that request is attached hereto as Exhibit 7. A draft of the application was completed by RatnerPrestia on July 23, 2003, and reviewed and revised by us as the inventors. The final draft application was submitted to us for final review and approval on August 13, 2003. RatnerPrestia proceeded to file the subject patent application in the United States Patent and Trademark Office on August 20, 2003.

13. From the time of conception and reduction to practice, we diligently worked with our patent attorneys to prepare and file the subject patent application. At no time was the invention abandoned, suppressed, or concealed.

14. The inventions covered in the subject patent application and in the parent application were neither disclosed to anyone outside of Princeton University without a confidentiality agreement nor on sale or in public use more than one year before the filing of the respective applications.

15. That Exhibits 1-7 represent documents internal to Princeton University and were created and distributed in a confidential manner.

16. That from the above statements and the documents contained in Exhibits 1-7, it can be seen that the invention in this application was made before the earliest effective date of the '977 publication.

17. That the following exhibits are attached to this Declaration:

<u>EXHIBIT</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	Letter recommending Proposal
2	Proposal
3	General Examination Report
4	Invention Disclosure Form
5	Legal Department Acknowledgement
6	Authorization letter to patent counsel for parent application
7	Authorization letter to patent counsel for the present application

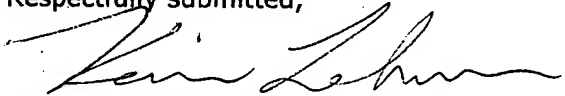
18. By each of our signatures below, we hereby declare that all statements made in this document of our own knowledge are true, and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true. Further, we hereby declare that these statements are made with the knowledge that willful false statements, and the like so made, are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001, Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing on the application

Dated: 8/15/06

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin K. Lehmann

\_\_\_\_\_  
Peter B. Tarsa

\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Rabinowitz

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18. By each of our signatures below, we hereby declare that all statements made in this document of our own knowledge are true, and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true. Further, we hereby declare that these statements are made with the knowledge that willful false statements, and the like so made, are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001, Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing on the application

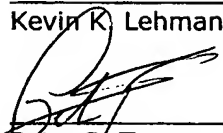
Respectfully submitted,

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: 6/23/2006

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin K. Lehmann

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Peter B. Tarsa

\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Rabinowitz

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Respectfully submitted,

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin K. Lehmann

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Peter B. Tarsa

Dated: August 9, 2006

  
Paul Rabinowitz

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Applicant: Kevin K. Lehmann et al.  
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**DECLARATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.131**

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

I, Steven L. Bernasek, hereby declare that:

1. I was the chairman of the General Exams Committee for one of the inventors, Peter B. Tarsa, a PhD. candidate at Princeton University.
2. The purpose of this declaration is to establish completion of the invention of the subject matter disclosed in the application in the United States at a date before the effective date of U.S. Patent Publication 2002/0092977 (the '977 publication).
3. All of the acts described in this declaration took place within the United States.
4. At all times relevant to this Declaration I was an employee of Princeton University, the assignee of the present invention.
5. I am familiar with the circumstances surrounding the filing of this application.
6. One of my responsibilities as chairman was to review a proposal of one of the inventors of the subject patent application, Peter B. Tarsa, to evaluate, among other things, the scientific merit and technical feasibility of the proposal.

7. I received a submission of a complete invention conception from Mr. Tarsa as part of his doctoral proposal before October 9, 2001, which is before the earliest effective filing date of the '977 publication. The doctoral proposal is attached hereto as Exhibit 1. A letter dated April 27, 2001 recommending the proposal to the Generals Committee which I chaired is attached hereto as Exhibit 2.

8. On or about before May 4, 2001 I heard the oral defense of the proposal.

9. Further, immediately thereafter, on May 4, 2001, a date which is still before the earliest effective filing date of the '977 publication, I approved the proposal. A copy of the General Examination report indicating this approval is attached hereto as Exhibit 3.

10. I did not disclose the invention covered in the proposal and subject patent application to anyone outside of Princeton University without a confidentiality agreement.

11. That Exhibits 1-3 represent documents internal to Princeton University and were created and distributed in a confidential manner.

12. That from the above statements and the documents contained in Exhibits 1-3, it can be seen that the invention in this application was made before the earliest effective date of the '977 publication.

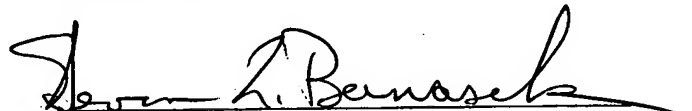
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14. By my signature below, I hereby declare that all statements made in this document of my own knowledge are true, and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true. Further, I hereby declare that these statements are made with the knowledge that willful false statements, and the like so made, are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001, Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing on the application

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 8/9/06

  
Steven L. Bernasek

Department of Chemistry  
Princeton University  
Princeton, NJ 08544

April 27, 2001

Re: Peter Tarsa

Dear Generals Committee:

Peter Tarsa came to Princeton with a weak undergraduate preparation for research in chemical physics and has worked hard to correct this. While this contributed to his getting a rather slow start, he is now making more than adequate progress on his thesis work. I gave him the basic idea for his generals proposal, but had not done any of the calculations or leg work (in terms of learning the state of the art of various components) required to evaluate the feasibility of the idea. Peter has run with his idea and has done an excellent job at turning my vague idea into a reasonable proposal. We are both now quite excited about the prospects for this new approach to fiber based chemical sensors. Development of this tool will almost certainly become part of his thesis research. His proposal has considered its applications for gas phase ammonia detection, but I believe its applications could be considerably wider.

I have found Peter to be a solid research student. His principle weaknesses are a shyness and lack of self confidence that goes well beyond that of our typical starting student. I believe he is making progress on maturing beyond these and I was particularly pleased to see his performance on his practice generals, where he handled himself quite well.

I am pleased with Peter Tarsa's performance and development to date and give him my full support to continue on to a Ph.D.

Sincerely yours,



Kevin K. Lehmann  
Professor of Chemistry

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# **An Optical Fiber Resonator for the Trace Detection of Ammonia**

**A proposal submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for a Ph.D. degree.  
Chemistry Department, Princeton University**

**Peter Tarsa  
May 2001**

## Background

Cavity ring-down spectroscopy (CRDS) is an established method for detection of trace quantities of gaseous species.<sup>1</sup> CRDS traditionally uses a near confocal resonator formed by two highly reflective mirrors. The rate of bulk molecular absorption is measured from the small fraction of light transmitted by the resonator, which decays exponentially in time. This rate is designated by  $1/\tau$ , defined as the inverse of the time to reach  $1/e$  of the peak intensity, and it is directly proportional to the concentration of absorbing species.<sup>1</sup> The decay time is generally in the range of microseconds, allowing CRDS to also facilitate real time analysis.

Such long cavity decay times are due to the use of highly reflective mirrors to achieve high cavity finesse. These resonators achieve effective path lengths on the order of kilometers and enable the observation of weak absorption lines.<sup>2</sup> High signal-to-noise ratios complement this increase in sensitivity. Laser intensity fluctuations do not affect ring-down times, and under ideal conditions the shot noise generated by the signal in the detector is the only limit to the signal-to-noise ratio.<sup>3</sup> This enables quantitative detection in the range of parts per trillion of a range of gaseous molecules. Such sensitive detection has been demonstrated with ammonia.<sup>4,5</sup>

A need for trace detection of ammonia exists due to its importance in industrial production and atmospheric processes. Ammonia plays a substantial role in chemical production, such as in the manufacture of nitric acid, but it is noxious to workers in concentrations above 25 ppm.<sup>6</sup> Chemical plant emissions also account for significant point source contributions of ammonia in the atmosphere.<sup>7</sup> Excess concentrations in the atmosphere disrupt the environmental nitrogen cycle and are especially toxic for plant life, as most plants have no excretion mechanism for ammonia.

The importance of ammonia regulation motivated the development of several fast detection methods for trace concentrations. Peeters *et al.* demonstrated the feasibility of Cavity-enhanced Absorption Spectroscopy (CAS) detection of 100 ppb of ammonia in one second in the  $1.5\mu\text{m}$  region.<sup>5</sup> CAS uses a high finesse resonator composed of highly reflective mirrors similar to a ring-down cavity, but it compares the change in signal amplitude to a reference cell instead of measuring decay time. Recent work in the

Lehmann research group showed that ammonia detection by CRDS provides improved sensitivity compared to CAS. Using a continuous wave CRDS device, detection of 1.51 ppb was accomplished.<sup>4</sup> This is the lowest detection limit currently obtained for real time analysis of ammonia.

CRDS is the fastest, most sensitive technique, but it has several limitations. The dielectric mirrors used in the cavity have reflective coatings that span only narrow wavelength regions, making broadband scanning and detection impossible. CRDS suffers from excessive loss and decreased sensitivity in a scattering medium such as smoke or condensed vapor. In addition, mirror performance in corrosive environments has not been thoroughly tested and may further limit CRDS applicability. Despite the many applications of CRDS, little has been done to overcome these constraints.

Evanescent wave spectroscopy (EWS) does not suffer from the same obstacles as CRDS because it does not rely on the direct interaction of the propagating electromagnetic field with the analyte. EWS instead exploits the phenomenon of total internal reflection (TIR) and the resulting evanescent wave. When light impinges on a surface of lower index of refraction than the propagation medium at greater than a critical angle, it reflects completely.<sup>8</sup> A field exists, however, beyond the point of reflection that is non-propagating and decays exponentially with distance from the interface. This evanescent field carries no power in a pure dielectric medium, but attenuation of the reflected wave allows observation of the presence of an absorbing species in the region of the evanescent field.<sup>9</sup> EWS traditionally uses a waveguide as the propagation medium and either gaseous or thin film analytes for both qualitative and quantitative detection. EWS instruments are more flexible than ring-down cavities because of the durability of most waveguide materials and their broadband transmitting properties.

Pipino, *et al.* combined CRDS and EWS to create a sensitive detector for coatings on a prism based cavity.<sup>10</sup> A hexagonal prism facilitates detection of absorbers at four of the surfaces through attenuation of the evanescent field. Small prisms, in place of highly reflective mirrors, are used to couple light in and out of the resonator by photon tunneling and introduce broadband capabilities. A monolithic resonator effectively combines the versatility of an EWS instrument with the high sensitivity of CRDS.

There are several limitations of the monolithic resonator based on requirements of the prism materials. The prism surfaces need expensive superpolishing to minimize scattering losses. The prism material also exhibits high bulk scattering attenuation, which is the primary source of optical loss and cause of reduced sensitivity. Implementation of lower loss materials and improved interaction of the evanescent field with the absorber through an increased number of reflections counters these sources of diminished sensitivity. This enhancement could be accomplished through the use of an optical fiber as a propagation medium.

Blair and Chen demonstrated sensitivity enhancement in a waveguide-based cavity, similar to the monolithic prism resonator, for evanescent excitation of fluorescent molecules.<sup>11</sup> In their device, a cylindrical waveguide excites the so called "whispering gallery" modes in the resonator, which are essentially trapped waves in an axially symmetric waveguide.<sup>12</sup> These modes in turn excite fluorophores in the analyte. This technique shows output enhancement, with an increase in the signal-to-noise ratio by an order of magnitude, enabling the use of significantly smaller analyte volumes. Blair and Chen hypothesize that such a waveguide resonator could similarly be used for absorption spectroscopy.<sup>11</sup>

The waveguide resonator could further be improved with the implementation of optical fibers to create an efficient combination of EWS and CRDS. Commercially available telecommunications grade fiber optics enable adaptable design and increased durability in such an instrument. The increased number of reflections in an optical fiber compensates for the lack of a large surface area that is characteristic of a monolithic cavity. A mode-preserving fiber ensures that only the lowest order optical mode is present, enabling maximum interaction in the resonator of the evanescent field with the absorber.<sup>13</sup> This is not possible in an "overmoded" waveguide cavity, such as that used by Blair and Chen, because of the complex mode structure of the resonating whispering gallery modes. The utilization of optical fibers would create an absorption-detecting resonator with signal-to-noise ratios and limits of detection comparable to CRDS instruments.

Optical fibers have the lowest attenuation where telecommunications lasers operate, around 1550 nm. Ammonia has several strong overtone transitions in this

region,<sup>15</sup> which are suitable for detection by CRDS because of their strength and relatively narrow linewidth. Recent innovations in telecommunications technology lend themselves to such sensitive spectroscopic application, as optical fibers are designed to transmit signals over many kilometers with little attenuation. In addition, removal of the cladding that surrounds the fiber core permits the direct exposure of an optical fiber to a gaseous analyte.<sup>14</sup> Currently fiber splices are the main limitation on such a device, but present methods enable the generation of relatively low loss joints.

This proposal aims to build a fiber optic based resonator for quantitative measurement of ammonia at limits approaching that of traditional CRDS. Current research in trace detection spectroscopy suggests the practicality of such a detector both in terms of production and utilization. The low cost of telecommunications grade fiber optics would make such an instrument inexpensive to build and maintain. This device would also have a wide variety of applications due to the adaptable nature of optical fibers. A fiber based resonator could be miniaturized to fit on an integrated chip, or it could be expanded to cover the circumference of an industrial plant production room. Such an instrument would provide a sturdy, low cost, and more versatile alternative to both mirror-based CRDS and EWS detectors.

## Specific Aims

The purpose of this project is to develop a rugged and versatile fiber-optic based resonator to quantitatively measure absorption of ammonia in trace concentrations. Time resolved absorption measurements will reduce most sources of noise and improve limits of detection. Techniques developed in cavity ring-down spectroscopy minimize the inherent problems with power ratio measurement, such as source fluctuations and low sample interaction. By applying evanescent wave spectroscopy through an optical fiber, cavity alignment difficulties will be eased, internal scattering concerns will be eliminated, and instrument durability will be improved.

The long-term goal of this project is to develop a practical instrument using low cost communication grade optical fiber, continuous-wave diode lasers, and inexpensive

diode detectors. The feasibility of a fiber optic ring resonator for time-resolved evanescent wave absorption measurements will be demonstrated using a distributed feedback diode laser with an acousto-optic modulator and InGaAs detector. Recent progress in continuous-wave cavity ring-down spectroscopy and telecommunications technology can be applied to this system, and an inexpensive, portable instrument devised for the measurement of a wide variety of analytes.

## Experimental Design

A diagram of the proposed apparatus appears in Figure 1. Continuous-wave infrared laser light is focused through an Acousto-Optic Modulator (AOM) and a Faraday isolator, into the input fiber. The Faraday Isolator prevents back-reflections which would cause laser frequency and amplitude fluctuations. The AOM allows the deflection of the incident beam from the input fiber for measurement of the ring-down decay in the resonator. One edge of the input fiber is mounted on a translation stage within a few wavelengths of the resonator to couple light into the cavity through photon tunneling. A 3m length of bare single-mode fiber with the two ends joined by a fusion splice

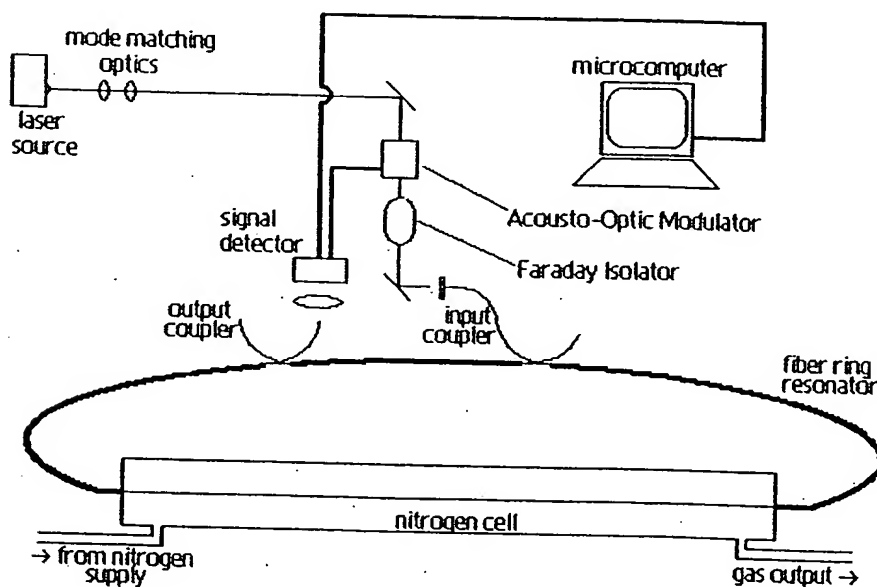


Figure 1: Design of Optical Fiber Ring-Down Resonator

forms the resonator. A 1m length of the resonator fiber, which is exposed to the core, is sealed in a nitrogen filled cell. Analyte gas can be introduced to this chamber for evanescent wave detection. At another point along the resonator ring is the output coupler. Similar to the input coupler, the output fiber couples light out of the cavity from a position a few wavelengths from the resonator and directs it toward a diode detector. The detector signals the AOM controller when a pulse of a predetermined amplitude is detected. The AOM then deflects the incident beam from the input fiber to allow the measurement of the ring-down decay. The detector also interfaces with a computer, which acquires the output voltage as a function of time and fits it to an exponential curve using a linear least squares fitting routine. The decay constant,  $\tau$ , of the resonator is extracted from the fitting parameters and represents  $1/e$  of the maximum voltage. In order to facilitate statistical analysis of the system, decay constants are averaged over 100 acquired curves taken over approximately one second.

The decay constant is related to concentration by the relationship

$$\frac{1}{\tau} = \frac{1}{\tau_0} + \alpha L$$

in which  $\tau_0$  is the intrinsic decay time of the cavity,  $\alpha$  is the absorption coefficient of a given concentration of the absorbing molecule, and  $L$  is the length of interaction of the field with the absorber. Measurement of  $\tau$  in the absence of ammonia provides the intrinsic decay time of the fiber cavity. This is accomplished by placing the cavity fiber in an atmosphere of nitrogen to obtain  $\tau_0$ . The analysis is then performed in the presence of a small quantity of absorbing gas for quantitative detection. Ammonia can be bled into the nitrogen line using a drip valve, and another series of decays is taken to obtain  $\tau$ . Another method of taking  $\tau$  and  $\tau_0$  that is more appropriate when it is not possible to control the quantity of ammonia is to slightly tune the wavelength of the source laser. Measurement at an off-resonance wavelength gives the non-absorbing decay constant,  $\tau_0$ , while  $\tau$  is obtained by tuning back to a resonance peak. Absolute concentrations can be calculated with only  $\tau$ ,  $\tau_0$ , and the characteristics of the detected line, which are published values.<sup>15</sup>

Though the measurement technique is not dependent on the signal power, it remains essential that a detectable amount of power appear at the output. It is therefore

important to maximize the input power and to couple the lowest order transverse mode into the resonator. A telescopic lens system matches the laser mode to the lowest order mode of the fiber in order to enhance tunneling probability into the resonator. Single mode fiber is used to preserve the mode inside the fiber, ensuring maximum interaction of the evanescent field with the analyte.

## Feasibility

The most important consideration is the minimization of optical loss in the resonator. There are several sources of attenuation that have to be addressed. Input and output coupling are similar and are an experimentally variable way to change both the loss in the resonator and the amount of power available for detection. Also important are the losses internal to the optical fiber, including bulk scattering and absorption, unwanted absorption at the fiber core's surface, and attenuation at the spliced joint.

A laser couples power into the input fiber most effectively if the light is in the lowest order transverse mode. This is achieved by using a telescopic lens system to focus the beam into the fiber. A single mode fiber is used to avoid mode scrambling, as it will only efficiently transmit the lowest order mode. The construction of the fiber complicates the mathematical description of the transverse mode. The lowest order mode is a near-Gaussian function however, and it can be effectively approximated by the lowest order Hermite-Gaussian, or  $TEM_{00}$ , mode. This is the least divergent mode; all higher order modes quickly radiate out of the fiber.<sup>13</sup> In addition to being the best mode for coupling into the fiber, the lowest order mode provides the most power for coupling into and out of the resonator.

Coupling efficiency, both in and out of the resonator, is analogous to the reflectivity of the mirrors in a traditional cavity ring-down experiment.<sup>17</sup> The loss due to coupling is directly related to the photon tunneling efficiency between the input and output coupling fibers and the resonator. The overlap coefficient is calculated by integrating the product of the two modal functions over space. It can be shown that the best overlap is achieved when both the input (or output) fiber and resonator are in the lowest mode, which is approximated by a Gaussian distribution. The combination of

single mode fiber and proper mode matching ensure good overlap and thus predictable coupling into the resonator. This improves the sensitivity of the apparatus by allowing experimental optimization of resonator loss and analyte interaction.

A calculation of mode overlap gives a value proportional to the coupling efficiency and a relative effective reflectivity in the resonator. Given that a standard single mode optical fiber is approximately  $8.2\ \mu\text{m}$  in diameter,<sup>18</sup> assuming a measurement wavelength of 1550 nm and negligible fiber separation, one can calculate a tunneling coefficient of 0.0632. This value can be adjusted between over 50% to 0% efficiency by changing the separation of the fibers, thus decreasing the tunneling coefficient. Appendix I gives a detailed approximation of the overlap. Because coupling can be experimentally tuned, this apparatus is limited not by the efficiency of the couplers but by the internal loss of the fiber. Using this property, it is possible to calculate some important resonator characteristics. Ignoring internal sources of loss in the resonator and assuming coupling of  $44.5 \times 10^{-6}$ , a bandwidth of 3.45 kHz is calculated from a free spectral range of 226 MHz and a finesse of 70596. These values can be optimized by changing the fiber separation to experimentally minimize resonator loss while maximizing detector response.

There are other sources of loss, besides the absorption of the analyte, that lie in the properties of the optical fiber. The use of commercially available low loss fibers and a fusion splice to form the ring keep the intrinsic attenuation in the resonator acceptable for sensitive detection. Standard communication grade optical fiber is available with specified maximum attenuation of 0.19 dB/km at 1550 nm.<sup>18</sup> A typical fusion splice adds another 0.02 dB, which can be improved by careful core alignment and fiber preparation.<sup>19</sup> Including these losses in the resonator characterization, a calculation yields a bandwidth of 344 kHz and a calculated  $\tau_{\text{empty}}$  of  $4.63 \times 10^{-7}$  s. This value remains sufficiently low for the desired detection limits, but it can be improved by careful splicing technique or increased fiber length.

Previous efforts at detection of ammonia through the use of resonant cavities show very low limits of detection.<sup>4,5,20</sup> This is based in part on the device and in part on the vibrational transition that is monitored. Several strong absorption lines exist around 1550 nm in the  $2\nu_3$  vibrational overtone, the most suitable of which is the  $P_{R_0}$  transition,

centered at 1551.96 nm<sup>15</sup> because of its strong intensity and good separation from nearby lines. The characteristics of this transition allow the calculation of a theoretical detection limit of 0.189 ppb based on the calculated resonator properties. Appendix II details this calculation. This sensitivity is comparable to current CRDS measurements and can be improved by minimization of the splicing loss.

A fiber optic based device is only recently possible because of technological improvements in fiber attenuation through reduction of bulk loss and better splicing techniques. Detection of ammonia at telecommunication transmission wavelengths is well documented for a CRDS spectrometer and will be reasonably accomplished by this new device. Many problems encountered in a traditional ring-down spectrometer are solved by this technique. Broadband tunability is accomplished due to the low loss characteristics of optical fibers over a wide spectral range. The use of fiber optics increases the durability of the apparatus and reduces the cost of materials. Mode matching difficulties usually encountered by a mirror based resonant cavity are eased by single mode fiber technology. Resonator coupling loss is adjustable through mechanical alignment of the photon tunneling distance. The main limitation in achieving the theoretical limit of detection is attenuation introduced by the fusion splice, but it is possible to control this loss by accurate cleaving and careful core alignment. We believe this experiment will successfully combine EWS and CRDS to produce a sensitive, yet rugged instrument.

## Progress Report

A large percentage of Professor Lehmann's research group's efforts center on trace detection of gases through cavity ring-down spectroscopy (CRDS). Previous work focused on observation of weak overtone bands of HCN with pulsed laser CRDS<sup>2,3</sup> and development of a continuous-wave (CW) CRDS device for the detection of trace quantities of H<sub>2</sub>O.<sup>4</sup> In an effort to extend the CW-CRDS technique to a broader range of molecules, a similar apparatus was constructed to detect ammonia.<sup>4,20</sup> Current work

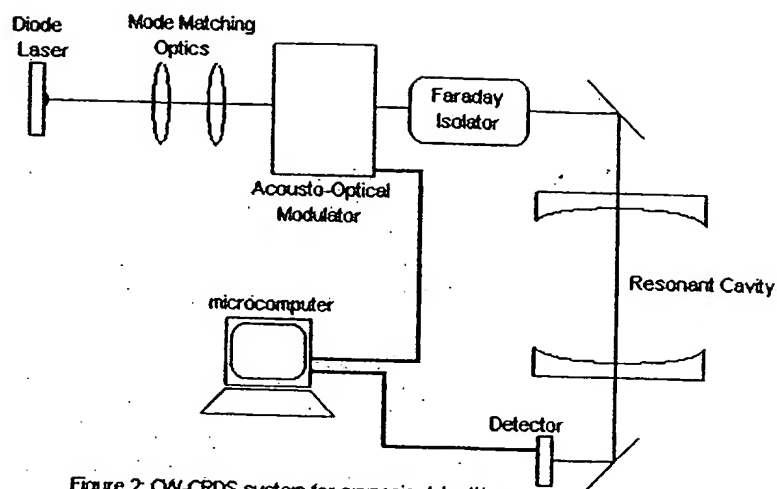
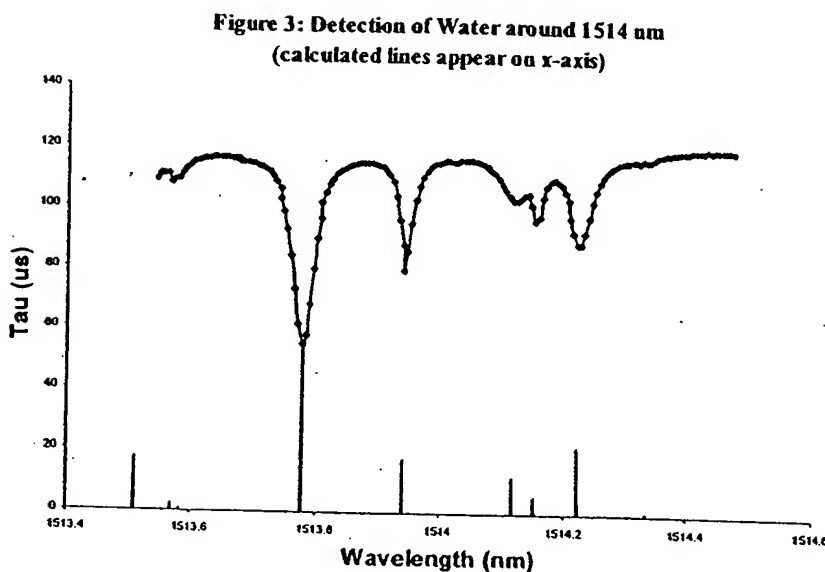


Figure 2: CW-CRDS system for ammonia detection

includes optimization of the CW-CRDS system and development of a prism based resonator patented by Professor Lehmann and Dr. Paul Rabinowitz.<sup>21</sup>

My work to date is divided between two projects, one of which is the CW-CRDS resonator for trace detection of water and ammonia. The spectrometer consists of a diode laser which couples light through a mode matching telescope, an Acousto-Optic Modulator (AOM), and a Faraday isolator into a cavity formed by two highly reflective mirrors. The AOM temporarily deflects the light away from the cavity when triggered by the ring-down detector, so it allows light to escape the resonator before another pulse is introduced. The Faraday isolator prevents back-reflections from the input mirror of the resonator from returning to the laser, since feedback causes instability in laser frequency and amplitude. A diagram of this apparatus appears in Figure 2.

John Dudek, a former graduate student in the Lehmann group, did significant work on this apparatus in collaboration with Win-Ben Yan and Armando Velasquez, both of Meeco, Inc. They showed the device to be capable of detecting water as low as 1.51 ppb in nitrogen, with a theoretical detection limit of 100 pptv.<sup>4</sup> The theoretical limit was not reached because of apparatus limitations for producing low ammonia concentrations. John Dudek also worked to extend the functionality of the spectrometer to other molecules. Using a similar device, he detected ammonia at a concentration of 1.51 ppb in nitrogen and calculated a theoretical limit of detection of 900 pptv.<sup>4</sup> My work on this project involved refinement of the ammonia measurement, detection of water with the



ammonia device, and detection of acetylene in nitrogen at the same wavelength. A water spectrum appears in Figure 3, along with calculated water lines.<sup>23</sup>

The other project on which I worked is a prism based resonator conceived by Professor Lehmann and Dr. Paul Rabinowitz. This device uses two roof angle prisms to form a resonator. The sides of the prisms that face the cavity are aligned near Brewster's angle to minimize reflection loss.<sup>21</sup> This apparatus is more versatile than a traditional CRDS resonator for several reasons. The prisms do not have the narrow bandwidth limitations of mirrors; they transmit through most of the visible and near-infrared region. The faces of the prisms, while important to the quality of the resonator, are not significantly susceptible to corrosion. The inside of the cavity can therefore be exposed to analytes that would damage dielectric mirror coatings, such as corrosive gases. The prism materials, however, require expensive superpolishing and precise cutting for use in such a resonator. A diagram of the prism resonator appears as Figure 4.

Greg Engel, a former undergraduate student in the Lehmann group, worked on the Brewster's angle prism cavity using fused silica prisms. He demonstrated the feasibility of such a resonator by measuring the empty cavity loss,  $\tau_{em}$ , as a function of wavelength.<sup>22</sup> My work with this device principally involves characterization of new materials for prism construction. Fused silica is highly susceptible to birefringence, which is an undesirable property because the Brewster's angle reflection, and thus the

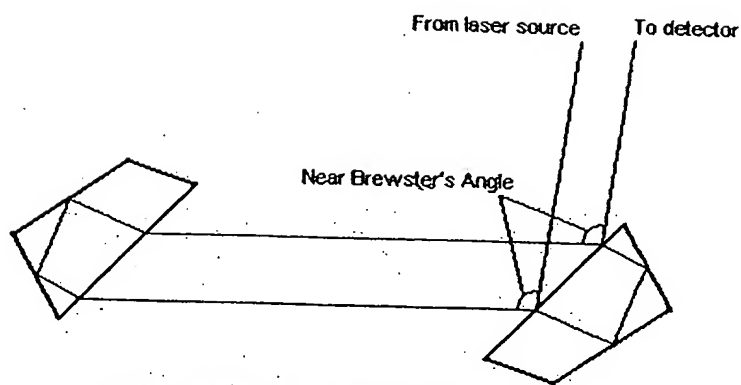


Figure 4: Diagram of Brewster's Angle Prism Resonator

cavity loss, is highly dependent on polarization. A fused silica prism is difficult to properly use in the resonator without causing stress-induced birefringence and affecting the Brewster's angle reflection, resulting in higher cavity loss. In the same way, it is not suited for use in a high pressure cell. The desired characteristics of potential materials I have studied include non-unique optical crystal axes (which may lead to birefringence), broad transmission spectra, and the ability to be superpolished. Successful identification of new materials will allow construction of lower loss prisms, facilitating higher cavity finesse and lower limits of detection. Thus far, I have investigated the loss characteristics of samples of undoped YAG ( $\text{Y}_3\text{Al}_5\text{O}_{12}$ ), sapphire ( $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ ), calcium fluoride, and barium fluoride with a CRDS device. Future efforts will include conclusion of material analyses, production of a better prism based resonator, and real time detection of multiple analytes at several different wavelengths.

The two ongoing projects in the Lehmann group conceptually point to the development of a low cost, broadband, rugged CRDS spectrometer. These qualifications are supported by current fiber optics technology. The Lehmann group demonstrated the feasibility of a CW-CRDS detector for ammonia and of a broadband non-mirror based cavity. Future work will emphasize extension of current CRDS methods to the development of a more durable and less expensive instrument based on fiber optics technology.

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## Appendix I: Calculation of photon tunneling efficiency

The tunneling efficiency is proportional to the overlap of the excited modes in the propagation media. In the case of the optical fiber resonator, single mode fiber is used in which only the lowest order mode is excited. The efficiency is thus proportional to the overlap of the lowest order mode of the input fiber and the resonator fiber. This is calculated below to find an efficiency proportional to 44.5 ppm based on a fiber separation of 7.5  $\mu\text{m}$  at a wavelength of 1.55  $\mu\text{m}$ .

The boundary conditions implicated by a step index fiber complicate a description of the transverse mode of light. The use of single mode fiber allows only the lowest order mode to propagate. Although this mode is described by a combination of Bessel functions, it is sufficiently approximated by the Hermite-Gaussian TEM<sub>00</sub> mode.<sup>13</sup>

The TEM<sub>pq</sub> mode, where p and q are the mode indices, is described by<sup>24</sup>

$$E_{pq}(x, y) = H_p\left(\frac{\sqrt{2}x}{w}\right) H_q\left(\frac{\sqrt{2}y}{w}\right) e^{-(x^2+y^2)/w^2}$$

where  $H_p(u)$  and  $H_q(u)$  are the associated Hermite Polynomials of order  $p$  and  $q$ , respectively, and  $w$  is the laser spot size. For a single mode fiber, the transverse mode is approximated by the TEM<sub>00</sub> mode, with  $p = q = 0$ . In this case,  $H_0(u) = 1$ , so

$$E_{pq}(x, y) = e^{-(x^2+y^2)/w^2}$$

The function is not normalized, so a normalization constant must be calculated.

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} N^2 e^{-2(x^2+y^2)/w^2} dx dy = 1$$

Integrating, we find  $N = \frac{1}{w} \sqrt{\frac{2}{\pi}}$ . The waist size,  $w$ , is approximated from the definition of numerical aperture. Numerical aperture (NA) is the maximum cone angle of light the fiber can accept; it is calculated from the indices of refraction of the core and cladding.

The waist is calculated from the NA to be 3.49  $\mu\text{m}$ , using<sup>25</sup>

$$\tan(\sin^{-1} NA) = \frac{\lambda}{\pi w}$$

It is substituted into the Gaussian mode approximation. The coordinates are translated such that the origin is at the center of the target fiber. The fibers are separated by a distance,  $d_0$ , and have radii  $r_1$  and  $r_2$ , corresponding to the input and target fibers, respectively. An integration is performed over all space to find the total mode overlap:

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} N^2 e^{-\frac{(x^2+y^2)^2}{w^2}} e^{-\frac{(x-(r_1+r_2)-d_0)^2+y^2}{w^2}} dx dy$$

This calculation yields a coupling efficiency proportional to  $44.5 \times 10^{-6}$  from two fibers  $8.2\mu\text{m}$  in diameter separated by an additional  $7.5\mu\text{m}$ . Figure 4 shows a plot of the overlapped functions.

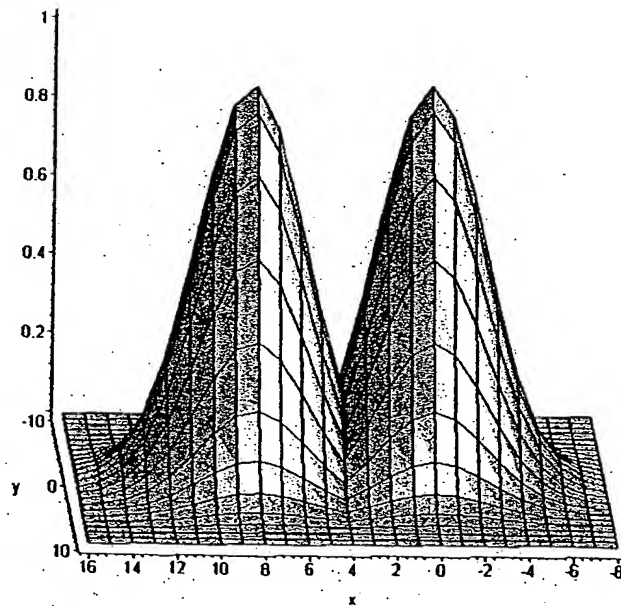


Figure 4: Overlap of two single mode optical fibers of radii  $= 4.1 \mu\text{m}$  with no additional separation ( $x, y$  in  $\mu\text{m}$ )

## Appendix II: Calculation of theoretical detection limit

This section describes the lowest detectable concentration of ammonia in the 1550 nm region with the fiber-based resonator in the shot noise limited case.

Convention dictates that twice the standard deviation of a measurement represent the theoretical limit of detection. Romanini and Lehmann<sup>3,17</sup> represent the standard deviation of the detected absorption coefficient in the shot noise limited case as

$$\sigma_{\alpha} = \frac{1}{l\sqrt{QN_0}} \sqrt{\frac{\Delta\nu}{FSR}} \sqrt{\frac{(T+L)^3}{T^2}}$$

where  $l$  is the resonator length,  $T$  is the transmittivity of the mirrors,  $L$  is the additional loss in the resonator,  $Q$  is the quantum yield of the detector,  $N_0$  is the number of photons striking the resonator input,  $\Delta\nu$  is the linewidth of the input and FSR is the free spectral range of the resonator, calculated by  $c/(nd)$ , where  $c$  is the speed of light in vacuum,  $n$  is the index of refraction in the resonator, and  $d$  is the distance of one round trip in the ring. The standard deviation of the absorption coefficient,  $\alpha$ , is calculated and related to an absolute concentration of ammonia.

### *Calculation of $\Delta\nu$*

The bandwidth of the input is best calculated by a convolution of the laser linewidth and the cavity bandwidth. This is approximated by the square root of the sum of the squares of the two values. Diode laser linewidths are often on the order of 1 MHz.<sup>4</sup> The resonator bandwidth is calculated from the finesse ( $\pi R^{1/2}/(1-R)$ ), where  $R$  is the loss in round trip transmission of the resonator. This is found to be 660 assuming coupling of approximately 40 ppm, and typical fiber loss of 0.19 dB/km (131 ppm/3m) and 0.02 dB/splice (4100 ppm). The free spectral range calculated from the above expression is 226 MHz. This gives a resonator bandwidth of 344 kHz. This results in a  $\Delta\nu$  of  $1.06 \times 10^6$ .

### *Estimation of resonator loss*

The transmittivity of the resonator is analogous to the tunneling efficiency of the input and output couplers. The balance between coupling and detection response is achieved when  $2T = L$ .<sup>17</sup> The significant sources of loss in the resonator are the bulk attenuation of the fiber and the splicing loss. Standard single mode fiber<sup>18</sup> has specified loss of 0.19 dB/km, which corresponds to a loss of 131 ppm over a 3 m resonator length. A typical fusion splice<sup>19</sup> attenuates 0.02 dB, or 4600 ppm. These numbers are combined to give a loss of  $L = 4731 \times 10^{-6}$ . We will take  $T = L/2 = 2366 \times 10^{-6}$ .

### *Determination of detector response*

The threshold power of typical optical fibers is on the order of 10 mW before performance is compromised. For 1 second of detection at 10 mW of power,  $7.5 \times 10^{16}$  photons are introduced to the resonator. In order to determine the  $QN_0$  product, the quantum yield of the detector must also be calculated. A typical InGaAs photodiode detector has a quantum yield of 0.745 electrons/photon. This corresponds to a  $QN_0$  product of  $5.58 \times 10^{16}$ .

From the above information, the standard deviation in a detectable absorption coefficient is  $2.44 \times 10^{-13}$  /cm. This must be further corrected to reflect evanescent detection. The majority of the field propagates in the fiber and only a small percentage exists in the evanescent field for interaction with the absorber. This percentage is calculated by finding the ratio of the Bessel functions describing the confined and evanescent fields. The percentage is determined to be 4.5%, giving a limit of detection of  $1.09 \times 10^{-11}$  /cm in 1 second. This can be further related to an absolute concentration.

### *Calculation of detectable concentration*

Typically, CRDS measurements yield an absorption coefficient, which is then converted to a concentration. A similar calculation is done using twice the standard deviation of a detectable absorption coefficient as the theoretical limit of detection. This was calculated to be  $1.09 \times 10^{-11}$  /cm. The strength,  $S$ , of the monitored ammonia line is

$0.7000 \times 10^{-4} \text{ cm}^{-1} \text{ torr}^{-1}$ . The smallest measurable  $\alpha$  can be converted to a partial pressure using

$$\alpha_{\text{lim}} = P_{\text{lim}} S$$

The partial pressure of ammonia corresponding to  $\alpha_{\text{lim}}$  is  $1.55 \times 10^{-7}$  torr, or  $2.04 \times 10^{-10}$  atm. This can be converted to a number of molecules per unit volume:

$$\frac{P_{\text{lim}} V}{RT} \times N_A = N_{\text{lim}}$$

where  $V$  is a unit volume,  $R$  is the ideal gas constant,  $T$  is the temperature in Kelvin, and  $N_A$  is Avagadro's number. The number of molecules in  $2.04 \times 10^{-10}$  atm of ammonia is  $5.02 \times 10^9/\text{mL}$ . This is compared to the number of molecules at standard temperature and pressure,  $2.66 \times 10^{19}/\text{mL}$ :

$$\frac{5.02 \times 10^9}{2.66 \times 10^{19}} \times 1 \times 10^9 = 0.189 \text{ ppb}$$

Therefore, in one second, 0.189 ppb ammonia can be detected in the shot noise limited case.

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**GENERAL EXAMINATION REPORT  
(PH.D. CANDIDATES ONLY)**

Dean of the Graduate School

DATE: May 4, 2001

Department of Chemistry

CONCERNING: Tarsa, Peter

(Last Name First MI)

(Social Security Number)

This report should be returned to the Graduate School Office within one week after the General Examination.)

Principal members of the examination committee were:

Professors Bernasek, Warren, Car and Lee

**NOTE:** The examination committee must consist of at least three members, at least two of whom shall normally hold the rank of assistant professor or higher on the faculty of Princeton University.

This General Examination was given during the authorized examination period in: (circle one)

OCTOBER

JANUARY

MAY

and graded as follows according to the appropriate scale:

I. Passed Failed

II. A B C D F

I. ☒ In the judgment of the department, the above-named candidate has passed the General Examination and may advance to the Ph.D. degree.

II. ☐ The candidate has passed the General Examination but is not recommended for continued Ph.D. degree candidacy. The candidate is therefore recommended for a terminal Master's degree and has been so informed. A brief estimate of the quality of the candidate's performance follows:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

III. ☐ The candidate has failed the General Examination and has been so informed. A report of the quality of the candidate's performance follows:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Because of this failure, the student's status is in question. Please give us the department's recommendation regarding continued enrollment and support:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

M. Semmelhack  
(Signature) Director of Graduate Studies

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Department of Chemistry  
Frick Laboratory  
Princeton, NJ 08544

October 29, 2001

John Ritter  
Office of Technology Licensing and Intellectual Property  
PO Box 36  
4 New South Building  
Princeton University  
Princeton, NJ 08544

OCT 30 2001

Dear Mr. Ritter:

Please find a Confidential Invention Disclosure Form enclosed for filing with your office. Any correspondence regarding this invention can be addressed to Professor Kevin Lehmann in the Department of Chemistry. Thank you..

Sincerely,



Peter Tarsa

**PRINCETON UNIVERSITY**  
**OFFICE TECHNOLOGY LICENSING AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**  
**CONFIDENTIAL INVENTION DISCLOSURE FORM**

Instructions: Please fill out this form as completely as possible. If more space is needed, please attach additional sheets.

**1. Title of Invention:** A Passive Optical Fiber Resonator for the Spectroscopic Detection and Measurement of Trace Species.

Inventor(s) Name(s)*	Princeton Univ. Address	Princeton Telephone	Home Address
Kevin K. Lehmann	110B Frick	8-5026	62 Pine Knoll Drive Lawrence, NJ 08648
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Paul Rabinowicz	101G Frick	8-2245	24 Thruway Drive Bridgewater, NJ 08807

\* The Office of Technology Licensing and Intellectual Property will contact first named inventor to discuss patenting and licensing.

**2. Category and General Description.** Is the invention a new process, composition of matter, a device, or one or more products? A new use for, or an improvement to, an existing product or process?

This invention represents a new device for Cavity Ring-down Spectroscopy. A traditional Ring-down Spectroscopy device is composed of a near-confocal resonator formed by two reflecting elements. This invention replaces the traditional reflecting elements and detection cell used in Cavity Ring-down Spectroscopy with a ring formed by a length of optical fiber joined with evanescent couplers to bring light in and out of the resonator. This invention allows the detection and measurement of gaseous species in trace quantities at the boundary of the optical fiber by absorption of the evanescent field that surrounds the fiber.

**3. Utility.** What are possible uses for the invention? In addition to immediate applications, are there any other uses that might be realized in the future?

This device could be used to either quantitatively detect gaseous species or as a chemical sensor to signal the presence of a specific analyte. The length of optical fiber in this device is adaptable to different acquisition situations, expanding the utility of the invention to a wide variety of applications. The device could be used as a distributed sensor covering several kilometers, or it could be built as a micro-sensor to fit on an integrated chip. As a gaseous detector the fiber could also be configured as a sensor at different positions along its length, allowing detection at many independent points. In addition to detection of gaseous species, the continuity of the optical path provided by the optical fiber may extend the utility of this device to detection of trace species in liquids, which are not presently measurable by conventional Cavity Ring-down Spectroscopy.

4. **Novelty.** Pick out and expand on novel and unusual features. How does the invention differ from present technologies currently being used in industry? What problems does it solve, or what advantage does it possess?

This invention improves upon the current technology in several ways:

1. There is currently no passive Cavity Ring-down device composed of optical fiber.
2. This is the first distributed sensor device using Cavity Ring-down Spectroscopy, allowing detection at different and widely separated positions along the optical path.
3. The use of evanescent couplers in place of more conventional reflecting elements reduces resonator alignment difficulties present in current Cavity Ring-down Spectroscopy devices. The permanent nature of the coupling also reduces the possibility of the device becoming misaligned during use.
4. The materials used in this device are significantly less expensive than the optical elements used in conventional Cavity Ring-down Spectroscopy. In addition, the materials are more versatile in terms of optical scanning bandwidth and physical durability.

The combination of these points leads to a new device that both improves the current technology and introduces new properties not yet available in the state of the art.

5. **Method of Synthesis, Assembly, or Process.** If the invention is a composition of matter, a device, or a product, how is it made? If the invention is a process, what are the steps involved?

The invention is built by joining a length of optical fiber on each end to separate commercially available fiber optic couplers. The couplers are then joined to each other to complete a ring. The couplers must be configured such that only a low percentage of light is coupled into and out of the ring. Light can be introduced into the ring from a laser directed into one of the couplers. The resonator output can be detected at the other coupler by focusing the emitted light onto a photodetector. The input light must be modulated such that after light is built up inside the resonator the laser source is turned off to allow the detector to measure the decay of resonating light down to low levels. Sections of the fiber are stripped of their cladding to expose the evanescent field of light traveling in the fiber core. The fiber can also be wrapped around a precision circumference shaft to increase exposure of the evanescent wave and interaction with the absorbing species. Absorption of this light increases the rate of decay of the detected light, which can be compared in the presence and absence of absorbing species to obtain an absolute analyte concentration, as in conventional Cavity Ring-down Spectroscopy.

6. **Limitations.** Does this invention possess disadvantages or limitations? Can they be overcome? How?

The detection limit of this device, and thus the sensitivity, is currently determined by the optical loss in the system. This includes the quality of the coupler-fiber connections, the loss due to the couplers, and inherent attenuation in the optical fiber. At present, these losses are sufficiently low to make this device useful, though they will be improved with advances in fiber optics technology. In addition, the window of low attenuation in standard optical fiber is narrow enough to limit the range of detectable species. This window is due to the physical properties of the fused silica used in optical fibers. However, this device will have applications despite this limitation. Furthermore, recent advances in "photonic bandgap" and related structurally engineered fibers may allow significant extension of the available wavelength range. Also, fibers made of other materials, such as sapphire, could in principle be used as well.

7. **Experimental Verification.** Have you tested the invention experimentally? YES X NO \_\_\_\_ If yes, describe below. Have you constructed a prototype, model, or test samples which are available for examination? YES X NO \_\_\_\_ If yes, describe below.

Ring-down signals have been successfully observed and analyzed in a passive optical fiber resonator. As of this submission, the device has not been tested for chemical detection, though calculations have been performed suggesting a low detection limit attainable for trace analysis. The experimental device is available for examination, though it is incomplete as of this submission.

8. **Publications.**

A) Have you described the invention in a publication or an oral presentation? What was the date of publication or presentation? Was it described in specific or general fashion? Include abstracts of talks, news stories, etc. Be sure to include copies of any publications, label them collectively as attachment A.

This invention has not yet been described in publication or public presentation.

B) Any planned future publications or public disclosure? YES X NO \_\_\_\_ If yes please include a date when the publication will go into the U.S. mail for distribution and the date any public disclosure such as a talk will take place. If there are attachments label as attachment B.

This invention will be disclosed in future funding requests, including a fellowship application to the Environmental Protection Agency, due November 19, 2001. Other funding submissions have not yet been determined.

9. **References.** Are there inventions or publications by others that are related to this invention? Please list on a separate sheet, and attach copies if available. Label this list and attach collectively as attachment C.

Seven (7) references have been found. They are included as Attachment C.

10. **Sponsorship.** Was the work that led to the invention sponsored? List sponsors below and attach copies of contracts or grant agreements if available. Label these collectively as attachment D.

Sponsor

Contract or Grant  
Number

Check if copy  
provided

a) New Jersey Comission on Science and Technology (NJCST)  
NJCST 01-2042-007-05

11. **MTAs.** Was the invention made with any material or biological substance obtained through a Material Transfer Agreement? Please provide the name of the provider, their affiliation and a copy of the Agreement.

No Material Transfer Agreements were involved in the development of this invention.

12. **Abstract.** Please provide a brief (less than one page) abstract of the invention. NOTE, THIS ABSTRACT IS INTENDED FOR MARKETING PURPOSES UNDER NONCONFIDENTIAL SITUATIONS. While it is important to include the novel nature of the invention, a general description, intended or proposed uses and utility, the abstract must be a NON-ENABLING DISCLOSURE. Please

DO NOT include the essential elements which would allow someone to practice the invention or reproduce the material without a license.

Cavity ring-down spectroscopy (CRDS) is an established method for detection of trace quantities of gaseous species. CRDS traditionally uses a near confocal resonator formed by two highly reflective mirrors. Recent advances point to the utility of ring resonators for CRDS. A low loss ring can be easily formed from optical fiber, providing a durable and inexpensive alternative to the optical components used in conventional CRDS. In addition, optical fiber prevents optical beam obstruction and allows the ring to be distributed over a large physical range. Combination of CRDS with the already-mature field of evanescent wave spectroscopy (EWS) and implementation in low loss optical fiber leads to a novel device for trace species detection through CRDS. This apparatus can attain the low detection limits achieved by CRDS while utilizing the versatility and durability of common optical fiber


**13. Possible Means of Commercialization.** How do you envision that the invention might be used in a commercial product or a process for producing a product? Feel free to include as many possibilities as you can. What advantages does this invention have over existing technologies?

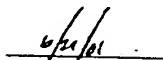
This invention is meant for development as a self contained commercial device. It could be used in a wide variety of different environments requiring chemical detection. Among the potential applications are chemical leak detection in production plants, chemical warfare agent detection in areas at risk of attack, and environmental monitoring near exhaust systems. The advantages offered by this device include the ability to cover large areas with the use of a distributed sensor, high sensitivity over the relatively broad spectral range between 1300nm – 1600nm, and the low cost of the required materials.

**14. Potential Licensees.** Have you described the invention to industry representatives? Did you describe it in a specific or a general fashion? Did they express any interest? Name them and specific individuals and their titles. Do you know of any other firms that might be particularly interested?

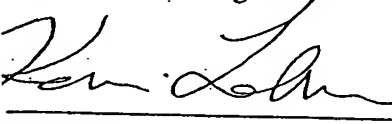
Some specifics of this invention have been discussed with representatives of Tiger Optics, Inc., who in turn expressed interest in developing a commercial version of the device. Those with whom this invention has been discussed are Lisa Bergson, Chief Executive Officer; Wen-Bin Yan, Director of Laser Research; Jim Turner, Chief Financial Officer; and Calvin Krusen, Chief Engineer.

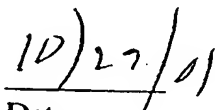
Invention Disclosure Form Completed By:

  
Signature

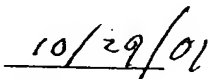
  
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Date


Attachment C: References.

1. Stewart G, Atherton K, Yu H, Culshaw B. "An investigation of an optical fibre amplifier loop for intra-cavity and ring-down cavity loss measurements." *Meas. Sci. Technol.* 12: 843-849 (2001).
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**Princeton University**

**Office of Technology Licensing & Intellectual Property**  
Fourth Floor, New South Building  
Post Office Box 36  
Princeton, New Jersey 08544-0036  
FAX: (609) 258-1159

To: Kevin Lehman, Paul Rabinowitz and Peter Tarsa  
From: John F. Ritter, Director   
Date: November 1, 2001  
Subject: Invention # 02-1876-1

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Thank you for your invention disclosure entitled "*A Passive Optical Fiber Resonator for the Spectroscopic Detection and Measurement of Trace Species*". Please refer to our file # 02-1876-1 in future correspondence.

The next step as we begin the technology transfer process is evaluation of your invention for patentability and marketability. This involves carrying out a patent search to determine whether a patent exists on similar or related technology. This evaluation process takes between one and six months, during which time I will keep you apprised of any developments.

Should the invention be found to be patentable and marketable, and if we are able to identify a potential licensee, I will arrange for a patent application to be filed by outside patent counsel, and begin negotiations on a license agreement.

**Please note that any publication or presentation made prior to the filing of a patent application will affect the ability to obtain a patent. Specifically, a public disclosure prior to U.S. filing will preclude the ability to obtain foreign patent protection, and will trigger a one year deadline by which a U.S. patent application must be filed or patent rights will be lost.** Therefore, it is important that you keep me informed of any coming publication or presentation dates, and send me any further data or developments, including correspondence, concerning the invention. It would also be helpful if you would let me know of any industrial contacts you may have or suggestions for potential licensees or sponsors of this or related research.

If you should have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to call me.

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Jacques Etkowicz

From: John Ritter [jritter@Princeton.EDU]  
Sent: Friday, November 16, 2001 3:25 PM  
To: jletkowicz@ratnerprestia.com  
Cc: Kevin K. Lehmann; Paul J Rabinowitz; lbergson@meeco.com  
Subject: Princeton Case 02-1876-1



ard for John Ritter  
(450 B)

Jacques:

This will confirm your authorization to proceed with the filing of the above referenced Princeton invention. Please bill Meeco directly for this patent and cc me on such invoices.

Call me with questions.

ohn

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**Jacques Etkowicz**

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**From:** John F. Ritter [jritter@Princeton.EDU]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2003 11:23 AM  
**To:** Peter B. Tarsa; Jacques Etkowicz  
**Cc:** Kevin K. Lehmann; Paul J. Rabinowitz; Lisa Bergson; John Ritter  
**Subject:** RE: New Fiber Optic Loop Patent Application

Jacques: If Lisa says to go forward, you have Princeton's permission to do so at Tiger's expense.

john

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Peter B. Tarsa  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 08, 2003 11:20 AM  
**To:** Jacques Etkowicz  
**Cc:** Kevin K. Lehmann; Paul J. Rabinowitz; Lisa Bergson; John Ritter  
**Subject:** New Fiber Optic Loop Patent Application

Jack,

We have put together a new disclosure describing an additional application with the Optical Fiber CRDS patent, which I have attached to this message. Because it is a new use for the concept in our original patent applications, corresponding to inventions 02-1876-1 (Our Ref.:

PRU-101US) and 02-1919-1 (PRU-101US1), we expect that it will be filed as a Continuation in Part, although your advice in this matter is welcome.

The disclosure was also sent to Princeton's Office of Technology Licensing. Although it will not be received there until tomorrow, we have informed them that it is coming. John Ritter, from their office, gave us permission to contact you regarding the patent process and to share the document with both you and Lisa Bergson. Lisa has expressed interest in funding the patent for this disclosure, and has indicated that she would like to expedite filing.

Please contact Lisa regarding the matter of financing a CIP for this disclosure. I will be available to discuss the invention itself when we begin the drafting process. Unfortunately, Kevin is out of town until July 21, but he should be in email contact for the beginning of this week.

Thanks,  
Peter

**PRINCETON UNIVERSITY**  
**OFFICE TECHNOLOGY LICENSING AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**  
**CONFIDENTIAL INVENTION DISCLOSURE FORM**

Instructions: Please fill out this form as completely as possible. If more space is needed, please attach additional sheets.

**1. Title of Invention:** Tapered optical fiber strain gauge using cavity ring-down detection technique.

Inventor(s) Name(s)*	Princeton Univ. Address	Princeton Telephone	Home Address
Kevin K. Lehmann	110B Frick	8-5026	62 Pine Knoll Drive Lawrence, NJ 08648
Peter B. Tarsa	101G Frick	8-6662	PO Box 1865 135 King Phillips Path Duxbury, MA 02331
Paul Rabinowitz	101G Frick	8-2245	24 Thruway Drive Bridgewater, NJ 08807

\* The Office of Technology Licensing and Intellectual Property will contact first named inventor to discuss patenting and licensing.

**2. Category and General Description.** Is the invention a new process, composition of matter, a device, or one or more products? A new use for, or an improvement to, an existing product or process?

This invention represents a new application for an optical fiber-based resonator having at least one tapered sensing element and employing the cavity ring-down spectroscopy measurement technique. We previously disclosed the combination of cavity ring-down spectroscopy with both an optical fiber resonator and a tapered sensing element in such a resonator, and the inventions are currently being reviewed by the United States Patent Office. This invention utilizes the high sensitivity to bending of the previously disclosed inventions to present both a new application and an improvement on the current state of the art.

**3. Utility.** What are possible uses for the invention? In addition to immediate applications, are there any other uses that might be realized in the future?

This invention is an improvement on other forms of optical fiber strain gauges mainly because of the enhanced sensitivity afforded by the cavity ring-down measurement technique. There exist many applications for strain sensing, including structural monitoring and materials testing, which stand to benefit from this invention. In addition, this invention holds the potential for significant impact on the strain sensing field, as suggested by the commercial popularity of optical fiber strain gauges, which have benefits not found in typical resistive foil gauges, such as immunity to electro-magnetic interference and relative chemical inertness. This invention provides these benefits found in other optical fiber strain gauges while adding the enhanced sensitivity afforded by the cavity ring-down technique. Furthermore, the incorporation of the cavity ring-down technique with an optical fiber resonator opens the possibility for highly sensitive distributed sensing or stand-off measurement of strain.

In addition to the measurement of mechanical strain, other physical parameters could be measured with further modification of the fiber taper. Other researchers have used polymer coatings on fiber tapers to measure temperature and pressure induced bends through attenuation of transmitted light. Including such coatings on the taper in this invention could show a significant improvement in sensitivity due to the inclusion of cavity ring-down measurement, expanding the possibility for highly sensitive measurement of additional physical properties.

**4. Novelty.** Pick out and expand on novel and unusual features. How does the invention differ from present technologies currently being used in industry? What problems does it solve, or what advantage does it possess?

This invention improves upon the current strain sensing technology in several ways:

1. Current strain sensing is accomplished with either resistive foil or optical fiber gauges. By incorporating the cavity ring-down technique, this invention gains the benefits of optical fiber strain sensing while improving the measurement sensitivity.
2. This invention uses a sensing technique commonly used in optical spectroscopy with a minimal amount of control and detection electronics, and expands it to the measurement of a new physical parameter.

The combination of these points leads to a significant improvement for strain sensing using the cavity ring-down spectroscopy technique, and it introduces capabilities not yet available in the state of the art.

**5. Method of Synthesis, Assembly, or Process.** If the invention is a composition of matter, a device, or a product, how is it made? If the invention is a process, what are the steps involved?

The device used by this invention is described in previously filed disclosures, and can be found in the referenced patent applications, References 1 and 2 in Attachment C. The ends of a fiber taper, coupled to a ring-down resonator, are fixed to a material undergoing strain, and a very sensitive response is measured by a change in ring-down time. This change originates from optical mode conversion within the tapered region from the lowest order propagating mode to higher order, more lossy modes. Specific taper parameters, such as length and waist, can be chosen to achieve either very long dynamic range, covering several orders of magnitude, or extremely high sensitivity, on the order of one micro-strain or better.

**6. Limitations.** Does this invention possess disadvantages or limitations? Can they be overcome? How?

The major limitation of this invention is the high loss in the optical fiber resonator. This loss reduces the minimum detectable change in ring-down time and thus the minimum detectable strain. Although overall loss can be improved by careful resonator and taper construction, it is limited by the nature of the components comprising the device. An additional limitation is the need for taper calibration. Because of the different modal conversion properties of different taper proportions, different tapers will show different responses to strain. This can be controlled by careful taper design and fabrication, and ultimately can be predicted and calculated for specific fiber and taper specifications. The taper is further limited by its own fragility, which arises from the small taper waists necessary for high strain sensitivity. Although this can be overcome by robust mounting of the taper, the versatility of the device is limited in part by the physical strength of the tapered sensing region.

7. **Experimental Verification.** Have you tested the invention experimentally? YES X NO \_\_\_\_ If yes, describe below. Have you constructed a prototype, model, or test samples which are available for examination? YES X NO \_\_\_\_ If yes, describe below.

Preliminary testing of the optical fiber resonator with tapered sensing region for bend loss sensitivity has been completed. Data showing "proof of principle" is available and theoretical routines are under development to describe ring-down response with different taper parameters and bends. A working version of this invention is in active use in our laboratory for related experiments and is available for strain sensing demonstration.

8. **Publications.**

A) Have you described the invention in a publication or an oral presentation? What was the date of publication or presentation? Was it described in specific or general fashion? Include abstracts of talks, news stories, etc. Be sure to include copies of any publications, label them collectively as attachment A.

This invention has not yet been described in publication or public presentation.

B) Any planned future publications or public disclosure? YES X NO \_\_\_\_ If yes please include a date when the publication will go into the U.S. mail for distribution and the date any public disclosure such as a talk will take place. If there are attachments label as attachment B.

Although this invention has not yet been described publicly, an specific publication describing the design details of the invention and related experimental results is anticipated for mailing on September 1, 2003. No attachments are included regarding this publication, as it is still in the preparatory phase.

9. **References.** Are there inventions or publications by others that are related to this invention? Please list on a separate sheet, and attach copies if available. Label this list and attach collectively as attachment C.

Ten (10) references have been found. They are included as Attachment C.

10. **Sponsorship.** Was the work that led to the invention sponsored? List sponsors below and attach copies of contracts or grant agreements if available. Label these collectively as attachment D.

Sponsor	Contract or Grant Number	Check if copy provided
a) <u>National Science Foundation</u>	<u>130-6810</u>	

11. **MTAs.** Was the invention made with any material or biological substance obtained through a Material Transfer Agreement? Please provide the name of the provider, their affiliation and a copy of the Agreement.

No Material Transfer Agreements were involved in the development of this invention.

12. **Abstract.** Please provide a brief (less than one page) abstract of the invention. NOTE, THIS ABSTRACT IS INTENDED FOR MARKETING PURPOSES UNDER NONCONFIDENTIAL SITUATIONS. While it is important to include the novel nature of the invention, a general description, intended or proposed uses and utility, the abstract must be a NON-ENABLING DISCLOSURE. Please

DO NOT include the essential elements which would allow someone to practice the invention or reproduce the material without a license.

Cavity ring-down spectroscopy (CRDS), an established method for detection of trace quantities of gaseous species, has recently been suggested to expand the variety of applications available for such highly sensitive measurement in optical fiber chemical sensors. A combination of CRDS with optical fiber sensing elements also allows for highly sensitive strain measurement. Such devices are capable of improving on the detection limits of typical optical fiber strain gauges while maintaining their added benefits over other types of strain gauges. Strain sensing in an optical fiber ring-down resonator allows the benefits of both the versatility of fiber strain gauges and the high sensitivity afforded by CRDS.

**13. Possible Means of Commercialization.** How do you envision that the invention might be used in a commercial product or a process for producing a product? Feel free to include as many possibilities as you can. What advantages does this invention have over existing technologies?

This invention represents a further improvement for an optical fiber ring-down spectrometer. It adds a new method of detection for a commonly measured physical parameter. The nature of the fiber taper allows for different design sensitivities, making low detection limits or long dynamic range available with the same control electronics. In addition, the construction of a fiber optic cavity ring-down resonator allows for easily replaceable tapered sensing regions, easing customization or replacement of damaged components. These traits, coupled with the large commercial market for strain sensors, suggest a significant potential impact for this invention.

**14. Potential Licensees.** Have you described the invention to industry representatives? Did you describe it in a specific or a general fashion? Did they express any interest? Name them and specific individuals and their titles. Do you know of any other firms that might be particularly interested?

Tiger Optics, LLC. is aware of our intent to file a patent related to inventions they have previously licensed, although they do not know the specific details of this invention. They have agreed to license this technology and pay for the cost of a patent filing, largely because this is a "follow up" to inventions they have already licensed. This previous work is covered in a patent application filed on December 12, 2001, and a "Continuation in Part" filed on May 29, 2002. It is anticipated that this invention could form a second "Continuation in Part" of the 12/12/01 patent application. However, it should be noted that the present invention would be used for very different types of applications than the previous cavity ring-down inventions from our group.

Invention Disclosure Form Completed By:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Other inventors signatures:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Attachment C: References.

1. Lehmann, KK; Tarsa, PB; Rabinowitz, P. "Fiber Optic Based Cavity Ring-Down Spectroscopy Apparatus," United States Patent Application #20030107739, December 11, 2001
2. Lehmann, KK; Tarsa, PB; Rabinowitz, P. "Method and Apparatus for Enhanced Evanescent Field Exposure in an Optical Fiber Resonator for Spectroscopic Detection and Measurement of Trace Species." United States Patent Application #20030109055, May 29, 2002.
3. Shankar, PM; Bobb, LC; Krumboltz, HD. "Coupling of modes in bent biconically tapered single-mode fibers." *Journal of Lightwave Technology*. 9: 7, 832-837 (1991).
4. Bobb, LC; Shankar, PM; Krumboltz, HD. "Bending effects in biconically tapered single-mode fibers." *Journal of Lightwave Technology*. 8: 7, 1084-1090 (1990).
5. Arregui, FJ; Matias, IR; Lopez-Amo, M. "Optical fiber strain gauge based on a tapered single-mode fiber." *Sensors and Actuators A- Physical*. 79: 2, 90-96 (2000).
6. Martin, A; Badcock, R; Nightingale, C; Fernando, CF. "A novel optical fiber strain gauge." *IEEE Photonics Technology Letters*. 9: 7, 982-984 (1997).
7. Gwandu, BAL; Shu, XW; Liu, Y; Zhang, W; Zhang, L; Bennion, I. "Simultaneous measurement of strain and curvature using superstructure fibre Bragg gratings." *Sensors and Actuators A*. 96, 133-139 (2002).
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9. Gupta, M; Jiao, H; O'Keefe, A. "Cavity-enhanced spectroscopy in optical fibers." *Optics Letters*. 27: 41, 1878-1880 (2002).
10. Brown, RS; Kozin, I; Tong, Z; Oleschuk, RD; Loock, HP. "Fiber-loop ring-down spectroscopy." *Journal of Chemical Physics*. 117: 23, 10444-10447 (2002).

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